

Advanced communication technology and digital, handheld devices have made the most significant impact on our spatial experience since the introduction of the automobile.

Roads impacted the shape of our cities, tearing out whole sections of the urban landscape to increase the speed of our travelling capabilities. The evolution of information superhighways, have similarly rapidly evolved the ways we communicate, navigate and perceive the world around us, yet have left the physical site of the city unchanged; space is now dissected between the physical and the digital, connected by our mobile-assisted ability to traverse freely between the two.

<THIS> is not a city.

The physical, tangible structure of cement, steel, brick and mortar can no longer constitute the whole experience of space. Now multifaceted, both analog and digital, urban life is a much a virtual existence as it is physical, a product of the mind and an extraneous phenomenon.

Artists have traditionally reinterpreted everyday objects and landscapes as a means to investigate our relationships with them. Science fiction creates alternate universes that either project a radical fantasy world, with aliens, monsters and space travel, or make subtle alterations that seem possible in near or distant futures. Both practices are forms of subjective transformation, challenging our perception of the ordinary world around us. They can elucidate the preconditions of a different way of living, providing the imaginary tools for a total revolution; material, economic, social, political, cultural and erotic – as though already immanent to the present. The city is a site in which these practices can be made public, reaching further than ever possible over digital channels, beacons via phones, drones and clouds.

With the support of the Telfer Gallery, The Scottish Book Trust and Edinburgh Arts Festival, Abigale Neate Wilson is delighted to host a discussion between Ken Macleod, Dr Sarah Lappin and Johnny Rodger, each selected for their unique and accomplished backgrounds in creative, critical and literary studies of cities. The event is structured as an open discussion, addressing the influence of speculative and imaginative engagement on urban culture, and the possible futures of our man-made dwellings. Ken Macleod will conclude the talk by reading from his 2014 novel *Descent*.

KEN MACLEOD

Ken MacLeod is one of the most significant Scottish writers to emerge from science fiction in the last twenty years. His novels have won the Prometheus award and the BSFA award, and been shortlisted for the Hugo and Nebula Awards. Loaded with satirical wit, his stories are complex explorations of future politics, bio-ethics and technology, casting a modern eye on the utopian form. He lives and works in Edinburgh.

<http://kenmacleod.blogspot.co.uk/>

@amendlocke

DR SARAH LAPPIN

Dr Sarah Lappin (BA Columbia, MArch Princeton, PhD University of Ulster, RIBA) is an architect who teaches in the school of planning, architecture and civil engineering at Queens University Belfast. She is co-founder of the All-Ireland Architectural Research Group, and is the current chair of the Steering Group of the Architectural Humanities Research association. Outside of her research into identity and architectural history of the twentieth century, she co-directs the project *Recomposing the City* with Dr. Gascia Ouzounian. This project invites the sonic arts into urban spaces, addressing the power of collaborative engagement between sound artists and architects to produce new design and practices of spatial understanding.

www.recomposingthecity.org

JOHNNY RODGER

Johnny Rodger is a Professor of Urban Literature at the Mackintosh School of Architecture, Glasgow. He is a published author of both fiction and critical writing, a frequent contributor to architectural press and a founding editor of *The Drouth* (2001), Scotland's literary arts quarterly. His field of enquiry engages with a cross-disciplinary criticism of architectural and social space, literary analysis and the layers of civic, historic and political structures that form Scottish cities. He has also collaborated with composers, animators and musical theatre, including work with National Youth Theatre of Scotland (2011) and the Scottish Opera (2006).

@the_drouth

ABIGALE NEATE WILSON

Neate Wilson (b. 1990, London) works in various forms of print, mixing the use of traditional printmaking methods, digital manipulation and laser technology to produce her images. She investigates the production of space in both an imaginary and actual context, and how these opposing worlds overlap and intersect. Abigale Neate Wilson lives and works in Glasgow.

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Abigale Neate Wilson

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Gallery

In collaboration with

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